

Breastfeeding and Obesity Prevention

Breastfeeding is the first step in obesity prevention.

Do you know that breastfeeding may reduce a child's chance of becoming overweight or obese? How? Breast milk has some preventive effects.

- Breastfed babies learn to regulate their appetites by stopping when they are full.
- Breastfed babies have lower levels of insulin, a hormone that promotes storage of fat.

The link between breastfeeding and lower risk of overweight appears to be greatest **after** infancy. At the ages of 9-14 years, which is a period of rapid growth and weight gain, children who were breastfed are less likely to be overweight than children who were formula-fed.